



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FENTON

To be a loving community of faith dedicated to helping people
know Jesus Christ and grow, share and serve as his disciples.

4th Sunday after Easter
April 21st, 2024 10:00 a.m.

1

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

INTROIT “I Will Worship the Lord”

Rutter

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 80

1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead your people like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

2 Stir up your might, and come to save us!

3 Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**4 O LORD God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people’s prayers?**

5 You have fed them with the bread of tears
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

**6 You make us the scorn of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.**

7 Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

OPENING PRAYER

23 :1-3 GOD, my shepherd!

I don’t need a thing.

You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
you find me quiet pools to drink from.

True to your word,
you let me catch my breath
and send me in the right direction.

4 Even when the way goes through
Death Valley,
I’m not afraid

when you walk at my side.
Your trusty shepherd's crook
makes me feel secure.

5 You serve me a six-course dinner
right in front of my enemies.
You revive my drooping head;
my cup brims with blessing.

6 Your beauty and love chase after me
every day of my life.
I'm back home in the house of God
for the rest of my life.

Thank you for being our Good Shepherd today and always. Amen.

HYMN #353 (BH #379) My Hope is Built on Nothing Less

CALL TO CONFESSION:

James 5:16 says, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Let us pray together...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Dear God, we do not understand our own actions. For we do not do what we want, but we do the very thing we hate. We are enslaved to sin. We know that the good does not dwell within us. The desire to do the good lies close at hand, but not the ability. We abandon the good we know and follow after evil. Everytime we consider a righteous act, evil deeds lie close at hand.

Like war refugees, we watch powerlessly as sin tramples over righteousness and good is polluted by apathy and despair. We are wretched! Who will rescue us from this body of death?

We place all of our confidence in your mercy and all of our hope in your loving grace. Free us from the power of sin with your forgiveness and call us anew into your household.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Let us all live together in the marvelous light of Christ!

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Dear Jesus, you are the good shepherd. You know your sheep and your sheep know you. The Father knows you and you know the Father. Just as you lay down your life for your sheep will you, now, teach our hearts the truth of your scriptures and open our minds to what you are revealing. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Zechariah 10:1-12

1 Ask rain from the LORD

in the season of the spring rain,
from the LORD who makes the storm clouds,
who gives showers of rain to you,
the vegetation in the field to everyone.

2 For the teraphim utter nonsense,
and the diviners see lies;

the dreamers tell false dreams
and give empty consolation.

Therefore the people wander like sheep;
they suffer for lack of a shepherd.

3 My anger is hot against the shepherds,
and I will punish the leaders,
for the LORD of hosts cares for his flock, the house of Judah,
and will make them like his proud war horse.

4 Out of them shall come the cornerstone,
out of them the tent peg,
out of them the battle bow,
out of them every commander.

5 Together they shall be like warriors in battle,
trampling the foe in the mud of the streets;
they shall fight, for the LORD is with them,
and they shall put to shame the riders on horses.

6 I will strengthen the house of Judah,
and I will save the house of Joseph.
I will bring them back because I have compassion on them,
and they shall be as though I had not rejected them,
for I am the LORD their God, and I will answer them.

7 Then the people of Ephraim shall become like warriors,
and their hearts shall be glad as with wine.

Their children shall see it and rejoice;
their hearts shall exult in the LORD.

8 I will signal for them and gather them in,
for I have redeemed them,
and they shall be as numerous as they were before.

9 Though I scattered them among the nations,
yet in far countries they shall remember me,
and they shall rear their children and return.

10 I will bring them home from the land of Egypt
and gather them from Assyria;
I will bring them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon,
until there is no room for them.

11 They shall pass through the sea of distress,
and the waves of the sea shall be struck down,
and all the depths of the Nile dried up.
The pride of Assyria shall be laid low,
and the scepter of Egypt shall depart.

12 I will make them strong in the LORD,
and they shall walk in his name,
says the LORD.

ANTHEM

Offertory

John Ness Beck

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Luke 13:6-9

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

6 Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. 7 So he said to the man working the vineyard, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ 8 He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. 9 If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not, you can cut it down.’ ”

SERMON

Ingredients of growth: Grace+Truth+Time

Pastor Lindsey Carnes

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Has anyone patiently told you the truth in a graceful and loving way?
To whom do you need to practice speaking like this to?

HYMN #209 (BH #76) My Song is Love Unknown

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

We know love by this, that Jesus laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers and sisters. May God’s love abide in us as we use our worldly goods to help brothers and sisters in need. Let us give our gifts to God with joyful hearts!

Dear Jesus, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth. And let us know that we are from the truth and reassure our hearts. You are greater than our hearts and you know everything. So we approach you boldly, receiving what we need—ever power to obey you. Please bless these, our gifts, to your mission and service. Amen.

(If you would like a written prayer request included in our prayers today, please indicate that and an usher will collect them)

Will the Ushers Please come forward.

OFFERTORY**DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**LORD’S PRAYER**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

TABLETALK WITH GOD’S CHILDREN

HYMN #542 (BH #540) God Be With You Till We Meet Again

CHARGE

And this is his commandment: that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another.

All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them.

And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

May the Holy Spirit fill you all with power, wisdom and understanding, and grace.

BENEDICTION The Peace of God**POSTLUDE**

Peace be with you!...and also with you!